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Next Review Date: 2008

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SUBJECT Wilhelm Pieck on SED Plans

DIST. 23 April 1947

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SUPPLEMENT

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1. SED chairman Wilhelm Pieck outlined present party policy to a select group of party leaders about 28 February 1947. Pieck said the SED demands a national assembly and a centralized government with a decentralized administration functioning in cooperation with the individual states.

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Comment: Later Pieck suggested that a central government could be formed by the parties and trade unions without holding an election for a national assembly, thus avoiding the possibility of an overwhelming popular rejection of the SED.

There is to be no rape of the states; only national and international questions are to be settled uniformly by the central government. If an election were to be held today for a central government, the result might not suit the SED. Consequently, the SED does not wish to overemphasize the formation of a central government; instead, it will put the establishment of a central administration in the foreground.

2. Pleck said that the time is approaching when political parties may be licensed throughout Germany. It would be better if the SED had two or three years more to prepare for this. The SPD will be re-admitted in the Russian Zone but will not be a source of danger to the SED. The SPD will have no leaders in the Russian Zone. "I should like to see a party functionary who, after having worked two years for us, now would turn and work against us." The KPD in the west will join the SED en masse, together with any other persons the SED can win over from the trade union or from other sources. Committees will be formed immediately for this purpose in the U.S. Zone. In the British Zone, the SED will hold back until after the April elections.
3. The central administration would be formed by the political parties and the trade unions. It could be used to organize a plebiscite on whether Germany is to have a federalistic or a centralized government.

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4. Pieck rejects a plebiscite on whether Germany is willing to accept the peace treaty when it is formulated. Pieck stated that there is too much danger that the treaty might be rejected because of unfavorable clauses, e.g., the eastern boundary.
5. To avoid forcing former members of the Nazi party into an anti-Russian stand, Pieck recommends a change in denazification methods. Pieck stated, "We wish that no further steps be taken (examinations, investigations, etc.), if no crime has been proved. The case is to be finally closed. This will cause us some inconveniences, such as returning homes to Nazis, but we have to put up with that. We must give these people a chance to participate in politics, to vote, and to be elected to office. Even so, we will still not be sure of these people. We will have to continue to influence them ideologically, and in such a skillful way that they do not feel they are being spied on or educated."

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